DEPARTMENT OF STATE / DOC/MR
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Department of State
Operations Center
(GUYANA WORKING GROUP)
Situation Report No. 14

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* DOD PA
Duty Officer
NMCC (LDX)

FBI
JUSTICE

Situation in Guyana as of 1800 Hours (EST), November 22, 19

A 28-man US graves registration team has been at Jonestown since early this morning preparing the dead for return to the United States. The Government of Guyana is assisting.

Three HH 53's (Jolly Green Giants) arrived at Georgetown from the United States earlier this afternoon. Fresh US crews standing-by at the Guyanese capital promptly began flying the helicopters to Jonestown to load and carry the bodies to Georgetown. Each sortie is capable of carrying 22 bodies. Helicopter operation will not be possible at night. However, the HH 53's had brought the first bodies to Georgetown before nightfall.

The first of the C-141's that will airlift the dead from Georgetown to Dover AFB in Delaware is expected in Georgetown at about 2140 EST today and will arrive back at Dover with about 80 bodies at approximately 0700 tomorrow (November 23). The airlift is now expected to take from 36 to 48 hours.

Survivors of the People's Temple Camp, now 72 in all, including those who happened to be in Georgetown at the time of the calamity, will be returned by military aircraft to the United States at a later date if they so wish.

At least 170 bodies have been identified thus far. Identification work will continue at Dover AFB. Next of kin have been and will continue to be notified as bodies are identified.

The criminal investigation in Guyana is continuing. Layton has been arrested and charged with murder in connection with the attack on the Ryan group. Also being detained as possible suspects are Timothy and Michael Carter and Michael Prokes. These three either turned themselves in or were found by the Guyanese authorities on their arrival at Port Kaituma. We have no direct information concerning press reports about money or other valuables they may have been carrying at the time.

Ambassador Mann of Guyana called on Acting Secretary Christopher this afternoon to express his condolences to the US Government and people on the death of Congressman Ryan and over 400 American citizens. He promised his government's cooperation in locating survivors and apprehending any perpetrators. Mr. Christopher asked that the Government of Guyana reconsider its decision not to allow any FBI team to enter Guyana. The Ambassador will convey this request to his government. Ambassador Burke and the Legal Attache visiting Georgetown from Caracas will follow up.

The FBI wishes to send an agent to Port of Spain to interview four People's Temple members who have appeared there. We have asked the GOTT for permission to do so.

Funding questions concerning Guyana's request for two twin Otter aircraft and spare parts for Huey helicopters remain to be resolved. We have asked nearby posts about the possibility of providing the Otters. A US firm could have one in Guyana in from 9 to 14 days on lease. We are examining use of AID contingency funds to lease these planes so that isolated Guyana communities do not become unviable because of damage to one of Guyana's two Otters during Saturday's shooting and need for another in Jonestown operation. DOD has completed a stock search for Huey parts and has found that only two or three of the minor parts are in our military inventory. In conjunction with Bell, we are seeking better identification of the desired parts to verify sources of procurement. However, we have found no source of funding to purchase these parts to make downed Guyanese helicopters operational.

DEA has asked for clearance to send an agent to Guyana to investigate reported drug use among members of the People's Temple. We have asked DEA to identify more precisely the requirement for such a visit given GOG sensitivity to investigative visits.

John A. Bushnell, ARA Director,
Guyana Working Group

T.G.Martin
Senior Watch Officer